

## Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 DACCA 02922 290959 Z

42

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

RSR-01 SCEM-02 EB-11 INT-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 OPIC-12

OMB-01 /123 W

----- 083232

R 290735 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY DACCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0193

INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE DACCA 2922

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: ENRG, PBOR, BG, IN, BM, PK

SUBJECT: OIL EXPLORATION IN BANGLADESH

REF: ( A) DACCA 2268 ( NOTAL); ( B) DACCA 1816

SUMMARY: BDG SEEMS TO BE EDUCATING POPULACE TO ACCEPT IDEA OF PRIVATE FOREIGN COMPANIES' PARTICIPATION IN OIL EXPLORATION AND EXPLOITATION. NUMBER OF US OIL COMPANIES HAVE RECENTLY APPEARED ON SCENE, INCLUDING A FEW MAJORS. NO BDG DECISION ON EXPLORATION CONTRACTS EXPECTED BEFORE AUTUMN ALTHOUGH " ENABLING LEGISLATION" FOR FOREIGN COMPANIES' ACTIVITIES REPORTEDLY UNDER CONSIDERATION. SEVERAL US OIL COMPANIES HAVE RAISED QUESTION OF POSSIBLE OFFSHORE BOUNDARY PROBLEMS BETWEEN BANGLADESH AND ITS NEIGHBORS, PARTICULARLY BURMA. BDG HAS APPARENTLY NOT YET FOCUSED ON ISSUE.

1. DR. MOFIZ CHOWDHURY, NATURAL RESOURCES MINISTER, TOLD LOCAL PRESS JUNE 28 THAT BANGLADESH COULD PROFIT FROM WORLDWIDE ENERGY CRISIS THROUGH EXPLORATION FOR, AND EXPLOITATION OF OIL AND  
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 DACCA 02922 290959 Z

NATURAL GAS RESOURCES. INDICATED THAT IF OIL STRIKES MADE HERE, BANGLADESH WOULD ENJOY ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL BENEFITS AND INCREASED INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE. SAID THAT, BESIDES MINING LIMESTONE AND OTHER MINERAL DEPOSITS, HIS MINISTRY PLANNED TO WORK ON EXPLOITING NATURAL RESOURCES FROM BAY OF BENGAL. CLAIMED BDG HAD RECEIVED OFFERS FROM 40 FIRMS FOR EXPLORATION OIL AND GAS, INCLUDING COMPANIES FROM US, CANADA, FRANCE, ITALY ( NOT MENTIONED IN EARLIER PUBLIC COMMENT), AND JAPAN . SAID THAT THREE- YEAR SEISMIC SURVEY WOULD BE MADE FOR IDENTIFYING DRILLING SITES. SET NO DATE FOR COMMENCEMENT OIL EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES.

2. RE NATURAL GAS: CHOWDHURY SAID THERE ARE EIGHT NATURAL GAS FIELDS IN BANGLADESH WITH 8.28 TRILLION CUBIC FEET OF GAS. ADDED THAT NEW DRILLING FOR NATURAL GAS IN BARISAL, PATUAKHALI, KHULNA, DACCA, FARIDPUR, SYLHET, CHITTAGONG AND CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS WOULD BE MADE IN COMMECTION WITH SOVIET FINANCED PROJECTS. SOVIETS TO ASSIST WITH DRILLING EQUIPMENT AND TECHNICAL KNOWHOW. REPORTEDLY BLAMED PAK " COLONIALISTS" FOR NEGLECTING COUNTRY' S NATURAL RESOURCES AND SAID HIS MINISTRY WOULD CONDUCT COMPREHENSIVE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF BANGLADESH. ( COMMENT: THIS ONLY SECOND MAJOR PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT OIL EXPLORATION AND POSSIBLE FOREIGN INVOLVEMENT ( SEE REF A). BDG SEEMS TO BE PREPARING POPULACE GRADUALLY TO ACCEPT IDEA OF FOREIGN OIL FIRMS' PARTICIPATION AGAINST BACKGROUND CURRENT SOVIET PARTICIPATION AND ALLEGED PAKISTANI PERIOD NEGLECT OF NATURAL RESOURCES.)

3. EMBASSY HAS HAD SPATE OF VISITORS FROM VARIOUS US OIL COMPANIES IN RECENT WEEKS. OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT BDG WILL NOT LIKELY CONCLUDE OIL EXPLORATION CONTRACTS BEFORE AUTUMN, IF THEN. BDG REPORTEDLY DRAFTING LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE FRAMEWORK FOR ACTIVITIES FOREIGN OIL COMPANIES. ALMOST ALL US OIL COMPANIES WE HAVE TALKED WITH ARE CONCENTRATING ON OFFSHORE EXPLORATION. AMONG MAJORS WHO HAVE APPEARED ON SCENE ARE UNION, OCCIDENTAL AND ATKNTIC RICHFIELD. MOST OTHERS ARE SMALLER COMPANIES WHO PROBABLY HOPE TO BRING IN MAJORS AS PARTICIPANTS IN ANY EXPLORATION CONTRACT THEY MIGHT WIN.

4. ISSUE WHICH NUMBER OF COMPANIES HAVE FOCUSED ATTENTION ON RECENTLY WAS QUESTION OF BANGLADESH BOUNDARIES IN BAY OF BENGAL WATERS. NO GREAT PROBLEM CURRENTLY ANTICIPATED RE INDO- BANGLADESH OFFSHORE BOUNDARIES, BUT CONSIDERABLE SCOPE FOR JURISDICTIONAL PROBLEM ARISES IN VICINITY BURMESE- BANGLADESH OFFSHORE BORDER ( SEE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 DACCA 02922 290959 Z

RANGOON 1356). PHILIP PARIS OF EASTERN PETROLEUM CO. AND ADOBE OIL REPORTEDLY RAISED QUESTION WITH UNKNOWN MFA OFFICIAL LAST WEEK BUT GOT IMPRESSION BDG HAS NOT YET FOCUSED ON BOUNDARY MATTER. NEWBERRY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNNNMAFVVZCZ

\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** n/a  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 29 JUN 1973  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** golinofr  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1973DACCA02922  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** n/a  
**Errors:** n/a  
**Film Number:** n/a  
**From:** DACCA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1973/newtext/t19730633/aaaajvew.tel  
**Line Count:** 119  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE  
**Office:** ACTION NEA  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 73 DACCA 2268, 73 DACCA 1816  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** golinofr  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 14 NOV 2001  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <14-Nov-2001 by martinml>; APPROVED <13-Dec-2001 by golinofr>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** <DBA CORRECTED> jms 980306  
**Subject:** OIL EXPLORATION IN BANGLADESH  
**TAGS:** ENRG, PBOR, BG, BM, IN, PK  
**To:** CALCUTTA  
ISLAMABAD  
NEA  
NEW DELHI  
RANGOON  
SECSTATE WASHDC  
**Type:** TE

**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005